

**Klickitat County, Washington**  
**Fifth Class County**  
**January 1, 1990 Through December 31, 1991**

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**Schedule Of Findings**

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1. County Officials Should Enforce Collection Of Delinquent Real Property Taxes

In the past several audits, we have recommended that county officials enforce collection of delinquent real property taxes in accordance with RCW 84.64.050.

In 1989, the former county treasurer started foreclosure action by filing a certificate of delinquency for parcels which had taxes owing for levy years 1973 through 1984. However, the foreclosure action was not completed and in August of 1991 an updated certificate of delinquency was filed. This foreclosure action is currently stalled in the office of the county prosecutor.

The county treasurer is prepared to file another certificate for additional parcels which have delinquent taxes owing for 1985 through 1988, but is waiting for completion of the earlier action. The total of delinquent taxes on both of these certificates is approximately \$ 90,000 plus interest and penalties.

RCW 84.64.050 provides that foreclosure action be taken against any property which has three or more years of delinquent taxes.

The county prosecutor indicated that the foreclosure action has not been completed due to turnover in office personnel and work load demand.

The county's failure to complete foreclosure action against these properties results in a loss of financial resources to the county and promotes taxpayer noncompliance.

We again recommend that county officials enforce collection of delinquent taxes as prescribed by statute.

2. Property Tax Records Should Be Properly Maintained

During our audit of the county treasurer's property tax records, we noted that as of December 31, 1991, the amount of taxes to be collected per the treasurer's tax roll records was approximately \$49,000 more than the amount showing as owing on the taxpayer parcel records. In January 1992, the county treasurer made a partial adjustment to this difference reducing the amount on the tax roll records by \$22,000. As of November 30, 1992, the difference between these records was approximately \$29,000.

The tax roll records serve as a control total for the posting of property tax activity. Any differences between the tax roll and the taxpayer parcel records suggests that errors have occurred in the posting to these records of tax levies, supplements, cancellations, or tax payments.

The above conditions result in a significant risk that errors or irregularities involving the county's property tax collection system could occur and not be detected in a timely manner.

We recommend that the county treasurer resolve the differences in the property tax records.

3. Accounts Receivable Control Totals Should Be Established

In the past several audits, we have recommended that control totals be established for all accounts receivable systems in the county. A control total is a necessary part of a receivable system to ensure the integrity of the system.

During the current audit, we noted that control totals have not been established by the county clerk. The clerk is waiting for the Office of the Administrator for the Courts to provide a computerized accounts receivable system which will have a control total.

Failure to maintain a control total over accounts receivable results in an increased risk that errors or irregularities could occur and not be detected in a timely manner.

We again recommend that the county establish and maintain a control total for all accounts receivable systems.

4. District Court Employees Should Be Adequately Bonded

During our audit, we noted that employees of the county's West District Court are insured for \$10,000 of fidelity coverage. This coverage protects the county from losses resulting from the want of honesty, integrity, or fidelity of an employee. We also noted that the amount of moneys which are under the control, at any one time, of these employees is significantly in excess of this coverage.

RCW 3.34.090 states:

The county legislative authority shall provide for the bonding of each . . . court employee . . . Such bond shall not be less than the maximum amount of money liable to be under the control, at any one time, of each such person in the performance of his or her duties . . .

Although the county can normally assume this type of risk, the condition noted violates the legal requirements cited.

We recommend that district court employees be bonded in accordance with statutory requirements.